

Louisiana Office of Public Health Laboratories	
Test Name	Heterotrophic Plate Count of Water
PHL Location	Amite Laboratory, Central Laboratory
CPT Code	N/A
Synonyms	HPC, Standard Plate Count, SPC
Brief Description of Test	Heterotrophic Plate Count, also known as “standard plate count”, is a technique used for estimating the viable bacteria population in a water sample for aerobic and facultatively anaerobic bacteria.
Possible Results	Colony Count/ml
Reference Range	30-300 colonies
Specimen Type	Drinking water, vending water, bottled water, dairy waters of all types, including recirculating cooling water and dairy water with glycol.
Specimen Container(s):	<p>Drinking water and dairy water samples are collected in sterile, disposable, 100ml Nasco Whirl-Pak bags, each containing a 10 mg sodium thiosulfate tablet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only containers QCed and supplied by the laboratory are suitable for use. DO NOT purchase privately. <p>Bottled waters are submitted in the containers in which they are sold.</p>
Minimum volume accepted:	100 ml
Collection Instructions	See Specimen Container(s) above.
Storage and Transport Instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Store and transport sample(s) in clean ice cooler. Dairy water samples must be at 0.0-4.5°C upon receipt into the laboratory. Maximum time from collection until analysis is 8 hours.
Causes for Rejection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sample > 8 hours old Sample frozen No sample ID Unacceptable collection container Insufficient sample Sample leakage Incomplete sample form

Limitations of the Procedure	Difficult to enumerate when bacterial population of sample is extreme.
Interfering Substances	Excessive chlorine, fungal growth.
References	DOLSOPDWM-02 Heterotrophic Plate Count Method for the Enumeration of Heterotrophs in Drinking Water Pour Plate Method SOP of the LA DHH-OPH Laboratory.
Additional Information	<p>Complete a Lab 8 Laboratory Request and Report Form.</p> <p>The following is required Lab 8 information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample sequence #s • Project code • Name of supply • Collected by (name) • PWS ID (if applicable) • Date and time of collection • Type of sample • Disinfectant residual (if applicable)
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